Survey Number CARR-1561 Approximate date of construction: circa 1870, circa 1916 Bixler Farm (Westminster, MD) Private Access

Capsule Summary Sheet

Description:

The Bixler Farm includes a brick Colonial Revival main residence constructed in the early twentieth century; a complex of six agricultural buildings; a frame house south of these buildings; and a frame garage or shed structure associated with the frame tenant house. The entire complex sits on a 45 acre parcel of land presently leased out as farm land. The Bixler house has a formal central drive lined with mature trees on both sides. The entrance to the house is flanked by sculpted shrubs. The farm buildings east of the residence are presently vacant, and suffer deterioration due to neglect. The frame tenant house sits close to Littlestown Pike south of the entrance drive to the Bixler house.

Significance:

The Bixler property, comprised of a brick Colonial Revival residence (1), six agricultural buildings (1A-F), a frame tenant house (2) with a shed/garage (2A), and 45 acres of land, represents changing architectural styles and agricultural trends within the landscape of rural Carroll County. Its significance exists on several different levels. Historically and culturally, the property's continued relationship to the original farm house across the road and the existence of the frame tenant house and original dairy buildings express the evolution of the area in general, and the historic parcel in particular, from larger nineteenth century farmsteads to smaller livestock-intensive farms and eventually to contemporary residential use. Architecturally, the main house represents a good example of the Colonial Revival style. The structures express trends in the evolution of local vernacular architecture in their relationship to the original frame residence west of Littlestown Turnpike, the inclusion of the tenant house, and the ongoing maintenance of the impressive brick Colonial Revival house and the collection of frame barns built in the nineteen teens. The house maintains both formal landscaping and its relationship to the historic agricultural environment and farm structures, three of which are representative of locally popular vernacular barn types.

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MARYLAND HIS	FORICAL TRUST
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Reviewer, OPS:	Date: WITH DATE DATE TO THE PARTY FARM
Reviewer, NR Program: 3000	Date: 12/11/98

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form MARYLAND INVENTORY OF Form Form

Survey No.	CARR-1561
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state	MD	county	Carrol1		
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Survey No. CARR-1561

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

See Contination Sheet Attached

8. 5	ignificance	Surve	ey No. CARR-	1561
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See Continuation Sheet Attached

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city or town Baltimore				

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to:

Maryland Historical Trust Shaw House

21 State Circle

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

(301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DHCP/DHCD
100 COMMUNITY PLACE
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023
514-7600

Survey Number CARR-1561 Bixler Farm (Westminster, MD) Completed by SHA (Jill Dowling) 5/20/97

7. Description

The Bixler Farm includes the main residence, a brick Colonial Revival structure constructed in the early twentieth century: a complex of six agricultural buildings; a frame house south of these buildings; and a frame garage or shed structure associated with this building. The entire complex sits on a 45 acre parcel of land. presently leased out as farm land. The Bixler house has a formal central drive, lined with mature trees on both sides. The entrance to the house is flanked by sculpted shrubs. The farm buildings east of the residence are presently vacant, and suffer deterioration due to neglect. The frame tenant sits close to Littlestown Pike south of the entrance drive to the Bixler house.

The Bixler House is a 21/2 story, 3 bay hipped roof structure on the south side of MD 97 outside Westminster, Carroll County. Constructed circa 1916, the building consists of a basically rectangular central mass, elongated by the addition of an irregularly shaped, 2 story addition in the rear. The structure has a hipped roof covered in asphalt shingles, with an interior brick chimney located on the west plane of the roof. This chimney was originally exterior on the southwest side of the gable, and now exists within the roof plane near the clipped gable that terminates the west side of the building. Other roof features include an intersecting gable on the north, dormers on the east and south, and a flat roof over the addition that serves as a balcony and is encircled by a metal railing. The building appears to be of wood frame construction with a brick veneer, and has a brick pier foundation. Most windows consist of one over one double hung sash, with picture windows and glass blocks located in the rear corner of the addition. Windows typically have dark shutters and are covered by striped metal awnings. The house has a full width porch that wraps around the north and south sides of the original portion of the structure, and extends to the southwest corner, where the addition meets the original house. The roof of the porch extends south to become a porte cochere. It is supported by fluted square pillars resting on wood bases atop brick piers. Sections of balustrades with turned stiles span the piers. A hipped roof supported by paired columns extends from the central doorway, covering the steps to the entrance.

The east, or front, facade has a symmetrical fenestration pattern crowned by a central dormer containing a series of three double hung windows. The first story has two double hung windows and a central door flanked by a transom and sidelights. The second story has three double hung windows. The symmetry of the structure's mass is offset by the extension of the porch roof to the south, to cover the porte cochere.

The north elevation features a series of eight irregularly spaced windows, occurring symmetrically in vertical pairs lined up on seven unique wall planes. On this elevation, the original blockish mass of the house (plane 1) includes a gable extending from the hipped roof, covering a bay protruding from the central block (planes 2,3,4). The north facade of the 1950 addition extends from this bay, evoking an elongated bay in itself with two short angled walls (planes 5 and 7) surrounding a wider central section (plane 6). All windows are double hung single lights with stone lintels and shutters,

Survey Number CARR-1561 Bixler Farm (Westminster, MD) Completed by SHA (Jill Dowling) 5/20/97

except the first story window of plane 6, which includes a pair of windows covered by a metal awning, without shutters. At the basement level, a smaller casement window exists. In addition, a small window covered by an awning exists on the attic level in the gable covering the bay. The eave line for this facade extends at the same level for the entire elevation, just above the second story windows.

The west elevation is largely irregular due to the addition and earlier modifications made to the original structure. Window sizes vary, and a balcony with wrought iron railings exists atop the 1950 addition. Behind this structure, a clipped gable (jerkinhead) roof covers windows and a door leading onto the balcony. A covered, partially enclosed porch on the first level provides a flat roof constituting a second story walkout at the southwest corner of this elevation, accessed on this level by doors from both the main house and the addition. A vinyl sided section of the second story main house incorporates one of these doors and a series of three small double hung windows. Beneath this, the porch roof is supported by square pillars on brick piers, and doors into the glass enclosed entry as well as stairs down to a basement door exist. Steps up to the porch encircling the south, east, and north facades exist at the southwest corner of the house, beginning under a hipped roof covering the main porch.

The south elevation basically maintains the original symmetrical configuration of the east facade, with three bays of double hung sash and a central dormer on the attic level. At the southeast corner, the porch roof extends across the driveway, creating the porte cochere previously described.

Access to the interior was not obtained.

The six outbuildings associated with the 1916 development of the main house are agricultural buildings constructed to accommodate the family's dairy farm. Two wood framed barns express typical regional design and detail, including broad gabled roofs with a framed central window, narrow vertical louvered windows accented with a pediment above, and wood tongue and groove siding. One of these buildings is crowned by a central cupola. An implement shed, a garage, a silo, and a milk house comprise the rest of the complex. The buildings were expanded to meet the needs of the dairy operation over its fifty year existence, and include non-historic elements such as concrete block infill and a composition garage door.

The second house is a rectangular, two story wood frame structure that existed as early as 1877. Originally a tenant house for the larger nineteenth century parcel that extended across Littlestown Pike, the house provided the main residence for the Bixlers when they first purchased the property in the early twentieth century. The structure has a side gable roof covered in asphalt shingles, and a central chimney to the west of the ridge.

The east (front) facade of the building reveals alteration of an originally symmetrical fenestration pattern through the addition of a second door between the

Survey Number CARR-1561 Bixler Farm (Westminster, MD) Completed by SHA (Jill Dowling) 5/20/97

window and door on the first floor, and the introduction of vinyl siding covering the entire structure. Six over six double hung windows are framed with shutters on this elevation, and a porch covered by a shed roof extends the length of the building. On the basement level, two fixed pane lights exist beneath the porch.

On the north facade, symmetrical fenestration consists of six over six double hung lights centered beneath an attic level opening now shuttered over. A bulkhead door off-center (to the east) exists at ground level. Six wide steps lead onto the front porch at the northeast corner of the building. The northwest corner includes a door with eight lights leading onto the screened porch on the rear.

The west facade consists of a shed roof screened porch extending across the facade, to an interior entrance at the southwest corner. There is no fenestration on the second story, and a single six over six double hung window on the first story. The roof is covered with a rolled membrane in poor condition.

The south facade if the house is configured identical to the north, with single six over six lights centered on the first and second stories, and a smaller window at the attic level. On this elevation, this window is a fixed sash divided (4) light.

A simple frame, side gabled garage structure sits behind this structure.

8. Significance Summary and Statement

The Bixler property, comprised of a brick Colonial Revival residence (1), six agricultural buildings (1A-F), a frame tenant house (2) with a shed/garage (2A), and 45 acres of land, represents changing architectural styles and agricultural trends within the landscape of rural Carroll County. Its significance exists on several different levels. Historically and culturally, the property's continued relationship to the original farm house across the road and the existence of the frame tenant house and original dairy buildings expresses the evolution of the area in general, and the historic parcel in particular, from larger nineteenth century farmsteads to smaller livestock-intensive farms and eventually to contemporary residential use. Architecturally, the main house represents a good example of the Colonial Revival style. The structures express trends in the evolution of local vernacular architecture in their relationship to the original frame residence west of Littlestown Turnpike, the inclusion of the tenant house, and the ongoing maintenance of the impressive brick Colonial Revival house and the collection of frame barns built in the nineteen teens. The house maintains both formal landscaping and its relationship to the historic agricultural environment and farm structures, three of which are representative of locally popular vernacular barn types.

The Bixler farm is located on Littlestown Turnpike (MD 97), north of Westminster in Carroll County, Maryland. Carroll County is part of the state's Piedmont region, consisting of 456 square miles located in north central Maryland between Frederick and Baltimore counties. Originally a part of Frederick County, the first settlers in this area were English immigrants arriving around 1723, soon followed by Scottish, Irish, and German settlers. Sources assert that they were drawn by religious toleration, but appreciated the natural resources of the area, including rich soil and characteristically beautiful topography. Agriculture has historically been the region's main orientation.

Carroll County became established in 1837. The local population more than doubled between 1840 and 1930. Roads played a critical role in related local development, as the area contained no major rivers and experienced no significant impact from railroad expansion.

Although agriculture consistently supported the local community, the nature of farming changed as the county population grew. In 1860, an average Carroll County farm contained 135.4 acres. During the next 70 years, agricultural statistics reported that more than 90 percent of the county land was devoted to farming. Early on, cultivation focused on grain; specifically corn, wheat, oats, and rye. After the Civil War, two trends in farming emerged. The overall number of farmers increased while the average acreage per farm decreased to 103.4 acres. This trend persisted over the next 60 years. During the same period, the amount of livestock in the county gradually rose. This rise was caused in part by a proliferation of dairy operations, which peaked between 1910-1920. In 1877, there were at least ten local dairies supplying Cold Spring Dairy Company and

miscellaneous creameries and ice cream companies. The number of milk cows in the county reached a peak of 20,809 in 1920.

Carroll County became the first county to have an organized farm bureau in Maryland in 1938. Today, agribusiness is the area's leading industry, generating 180 million dollars per year. According to the League of Women Voters, however, few new Carroll County citizens are farmers, and the rapid residential development in the area threatens the local historic agricultural legacy.

The Bixler property is located just north of Westminster, a city noted for its historic architecture. Studies of the city's building stock identify some issues relevant in considering the surveyed property. The earliest Westminster houses resemble outlying historic farm houses. Historians have asserted that the "Same individuals often built identical homes in the country and in the city at the same time." (Weeks, p. 3) This relationship of architectural influence between outlying rural development and urban houses has yet to be fully explored, but the same styles of vernacular frame structures can be seen on local farms as well as on city streets.

Weeks identifies two trends relevant to the structures existing on the surveyed property. He argues the presence of German vernacular influence on early Carroll County residences, correlating the plain, neat, compact houses with their 3-room plans, off-center front doors, opposing rear doors, and, most persuasively, their central chimneys. Weeks also identifies "tradition breakers" in Westminster during the late nineteenth century. He documents the appearance of non-traditional architectural influence and eclectic styles in the local landscape, and the corresponding group of local people willing to build individualistic houses that incorporated nationally fashionable ideas. After the construction of such notable houses as the Reifsnider "brick chateau" (1873), Weeks declares the beginning of a local trend of eclectic influence in the Westminster area. This led to a period of early 20th century architectural experimentation that empowered people to incorporate classical, Sullivanesque, and Roman details into area bungalows, shingle style and Georgian revival houses. Such modern architectural experimentation persisted well into the twentieth century.

The Bixler property today consists of two parcels that together contain forty five acres of land. This represents a small portion of a larger estate originally extending west of Littlestown Pike and consisting of parts of three historic subdivisions: Brown's Venture (sometimes referred to as Brown's Vexation), Ben's Fancy, and Stevenson's Conclusion. The land became a single parcel sometime before 1837, under the ownership of John and Ellen Byers and later, David Geiman. Early Carroll County residents, the Geiman family's members served as directors for the local bank, as magistrates, and Justice of the Peace. The attached surveyor's plat dating circa 1860 shows the contemporary Bixler property east of Littletown Turnpike Road, and the historic parcel's original house west of the road, as features of the irregularly-shaped plot of land

Bixler as they built a new house on their newly established dairy farm. The Bixler house expresses the rectangular plan, symmetrical facade, hipped roof, dormers, and pedimented portico associated with the Colonial Revival style. The porte cochere is consistent with the style, and some Queen Anne influence can be detected in the side bay with its gabled roof. Queen Anne features such as turrets and wide porches were associated with the Colonial Revival style around the turn of the century. From the road today, the Bixler house appears much as it did in the early twentieth century, and represents a good example of Colonial Revival architecture.

While basically honest to the style in form, the Bixlers embellished the structure with some eclectic architectural details, consistent with the "tradition breakers" documented by Weeks. The central door is flanked by decorative glass and arts and crafts style light fixtures, contributing to a bungalow feeling developing from the rectilinear massing and masonry construction. Turned balusters spanning the porch width and a gabled side bay add elements of Victorian eclecticism.

Although both the tenant house and the original Abraham Geiman house across the street have experienced substantial alteration, they maintain a spatial relationship that conveys their historical association. The twentieth century addition of the Bixler Colonial Revival house and attendant frame farm buildings demonstrates the evolution of the area, as historically large farms were subdivided into smaller parcels as the number of farms increased in the early twentieth century. The main house and barns were altered during the historic period, with a massive addition to the rear of the house in 1950 and alterations and additions to the farm buildings while the dairy was in operation. Interestingly, relatives of the Geiman's and the Bixler's still maintain the historic properties, and Hazel Bixler perpetuates the historic function of the tenant house by renting the building out.

Although residential development has infringed upon the west side of Littlestown Turnpike, the east parcel (Bixler Farm) generally maintains the appearance of the historic landscape. The fields continue to be farmed, and although they are no longer functional, barns and implements from the Bixler dairy operation remain at the site.

The Bixler farm is National Register eligible under Criterion A and Criterion C, as the main house represents a good example of the Colonial Revival style and the collection of buildings together represents the evolution of local architectural styles. The farm possesses a high degree of integrity of location, design, setting, feeling and association. The workmanship and materials of several of the structures have been compromised by alterations to the buildings including new siding, additions, and repairs.

belonging to David Geiman. The entire parcel as surveyed at the time included 133 acres.

In June of 1866, Geiman sold a 129 ¾ acre portion of this parcel to Abraham I. Geiman for \$7,000. The missing acreage seems to include a rectangular parcel west of Littlestown Turnpike Road used as a shoe shop by Fred Byers in 1877. Abraham Geiman resided at the house on his land, and by 1877 a second structure across Littlestown Turnpike Road appeared on the atlas, in the corner of the property created by the road leading east. By the time of Abraham Geiman's death in 1910, there is record of income of \$36 per year from a tenant house, likely the structure across the road that exists today on the Bixler property. (v 33, p 527)

In October of 1911, Wesley M. Geiman, executor of Abraham's will, purchased the property. He acquired 136 acres, 38 square perches (including addition land Abraham Geiman purchased in 1908) from Charles Starner and his wife Mollie for \$13,566.25 (v 118, p 101) after selling it to them in a public sale the day before (v 118, p101). In October of 1914, Geiman sold a parcel of 29 acres, 3 roods, and 23 square perches, located on Littlestown Pike. The deed specifies that this was a part of the land he purchased in 1911. The title was conveyed to Sterling and Alta Bixler for "\$10 and other considerations." (v 125 p 312). While not specified in the deed, oral histories assert that this land included the tenant house east of the road, and that the Bixlers lived in this house while building their new brick Colonial Revival style house, and the barns for their dairy operation.

Sterling and Alta Bixler, like the Geimans, were a family with deep roots in the Westminster area. Their land holdings eventually included an unrelated parcel inherited from Jonathan Bixler (his Home-Farm) contiguous to the Bixler United Methodist Church, formerly the United Brethren if Christ (est. 1877). Their dairy operation eventually expanded to include a contiguous 15 acre parcel, attaining its contemporary size of 45 acres. The farm passed from Sterling and Alta to their son John and his wife Hazel. It continued as an active dairy farm through the 1970s. Upon John's death in 1986, Hazel became the owner of the property. The land is currently leased out (as is the tenant house), and the dairy barns are vacant.

The Bixler farm expresses the evolution of residential and agricultural trends characteristic of Carroll County between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The earlier frame house is typical of the frame vernacular farm houses of the region in the mid to late nineteenth century. Although this house was historically a tenant house, similar structures are common farmstead residences. This house shares features with the early Carroll County, German-influenced vernacular structures described by Weeks, such as an off-center door, plain countenance, and most importantly, a central fireplace.

The Colonial Revival style was popular in rural and suburban area of the United States between 1880 and the 1950s, and it seems a logical choice for Sterling and Alta

Survey Number CARR-1561 Bixler Farm (Westminster, MD) Bibliography

9. Major Bibliographical References

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Graybeal, Jay. <u>Carroll County and the Great Way for Civilization</u>. Westminster: Historical Society of Carroll County, 1993.

Know Your County. Pamphlet produced by League of Women Voters of Carroll County, 1982. (Available at Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore)

Lake, Griffing, and Stevensen: <u>Atlas of Carroll County 1877</u>. Westminster: Historical Society of Carroll County, 1993.

Sheehan, Mary Bostwick. <u>The Pioneers of the Early Days of Westminster</u>. Baltimore: Carroll County Historical Society, 1924.

Warner, Nancy. <u>Carroll County, Maryland</u>. Westminster: Hadden Craftsmen Inc., 1976.

Weeks, Christopher. <u>The Building of Westminster in Maryland.</u> Second Edition. Annapolis: Fishergate Publishing Company, 1979.

II. Primary Research:

Carroll County Government
 55 Court Street
 Westminster MD

Records Consulted:

Clerk of Court:

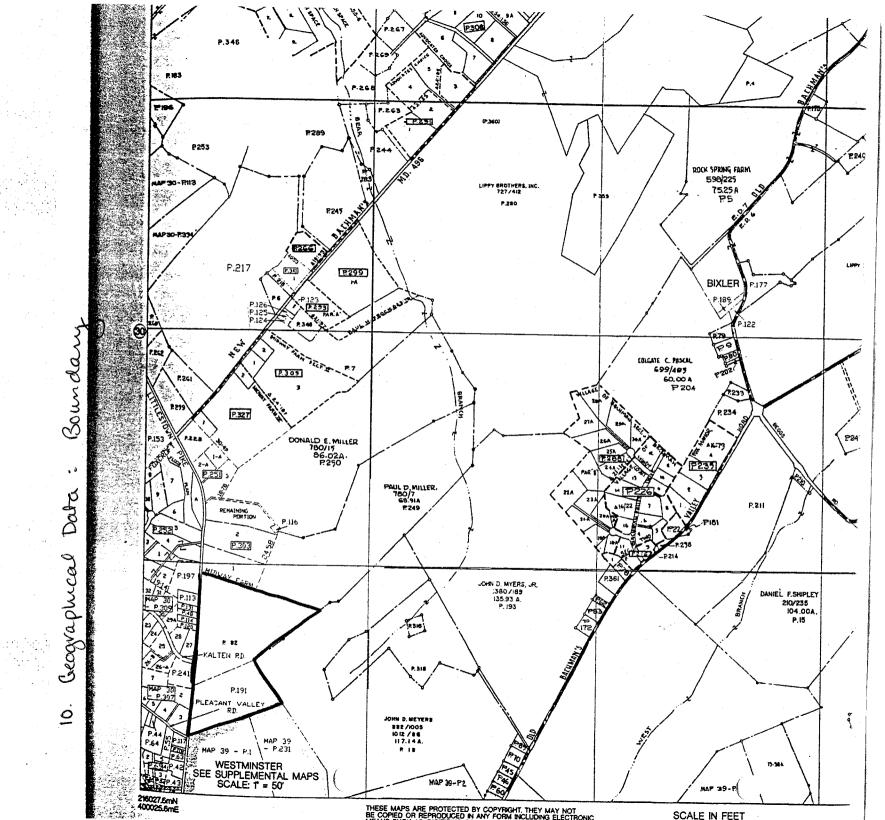
Deeds and Mortgages

Real Estate Plats

Wills:

Orphan's Court

2. Oral history: Hazel M. Bixler, at 1601 Littlestown Pike, Tuesday May 6, 1997.



Maryland Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan Data Sheet

Historic Context:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization:

Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Period Theme (s):

Industrialization/Urban Dominance A.D. 1870-1930

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme (s):

Agriculture, Architecture

Resource Type:

Category (see Section 3 of survey form):

Site

Historic Environment (urban, suburban, village, or rural):

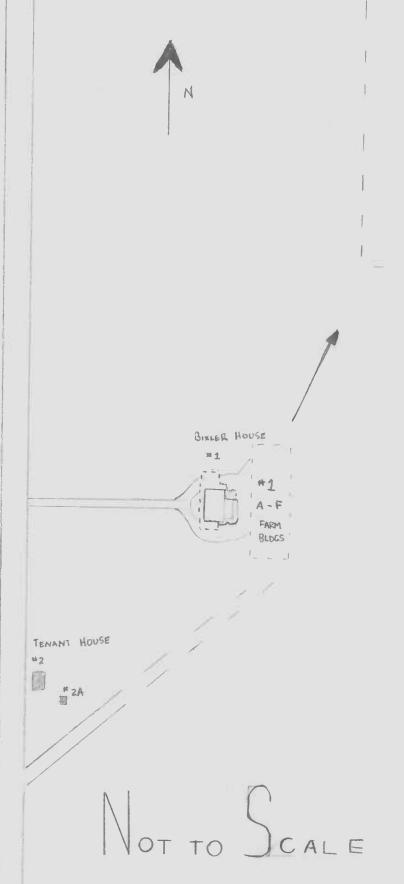
Rural

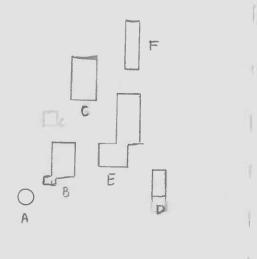
Historic Function (s) and Use (s):

Residence, Farm

Known Design Source (write none if unknown):

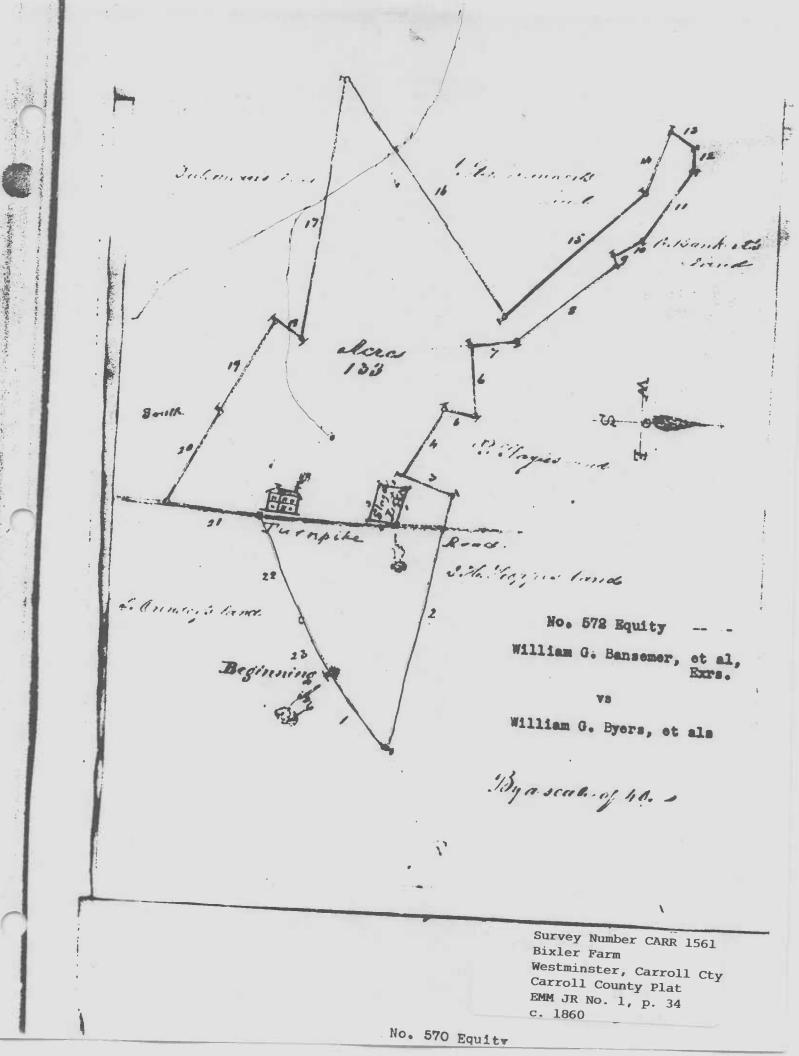
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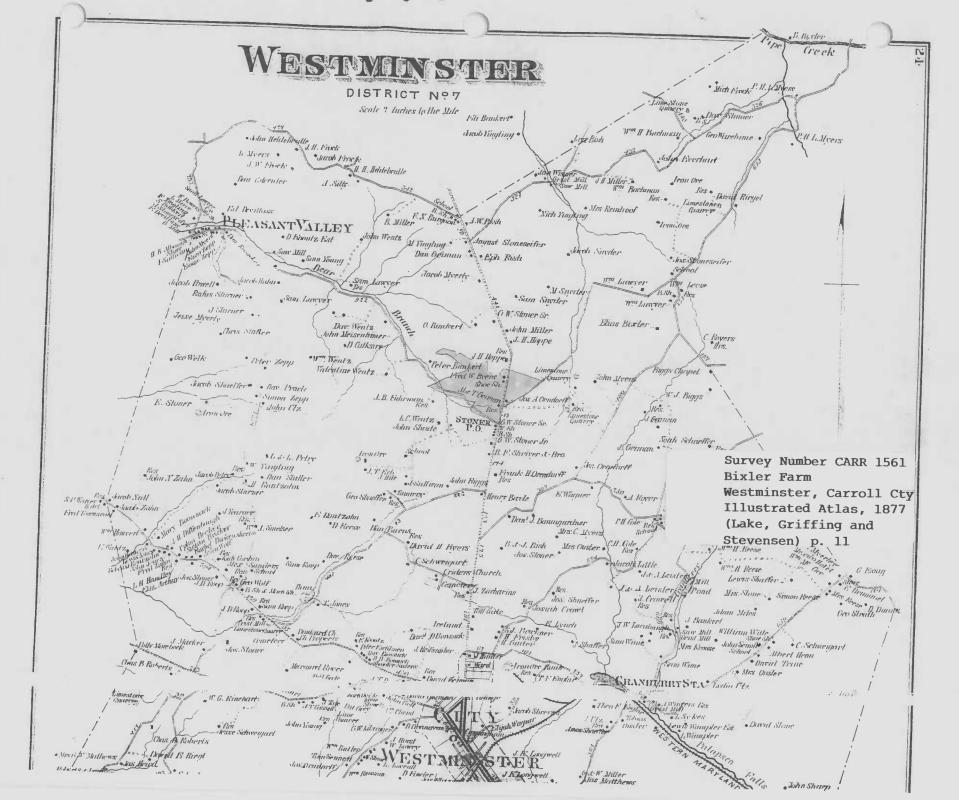


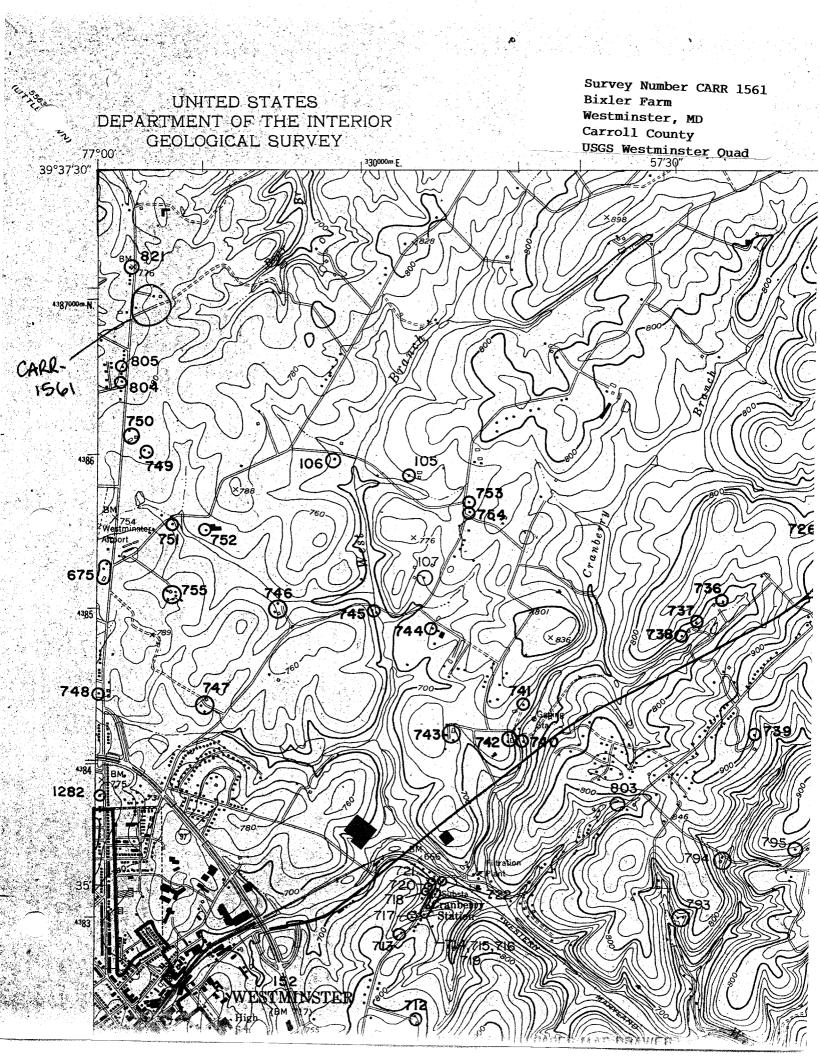


#1 A - F
BIXLER FARM OUTBUILDINGS

Survey Number CARR 1561 Bixler Farm Carroll County, MD Resource Sketch Map









Surgy + CARE 1561 Bixler Farm Carroll County, MD Rita Suplness, Photogy 3126197 neg = mDSHPO West facade, Bixler house # 10000



Survey # CARR-1561 Bixler Farm Carroll County, MD RITA SUFFNESS 3126197 neg = m DSHPO South facado, main house #2019



Survey # CARR-1561 BIXLEY FORM Carroll County, MD Ruta Suffiness 3126197 neg = MD SHPO South + east facades, main house #3019



Survey # CARR-1561 Exler Farm Carroll County, 11D Rifa Suffness 3/26/97 neg = MDSHPO east and out facade, main house #40 19



Survey #CARR-156! Bixler Farm Carroll County MI) Rula Suffress 3126197 neg = MDSHPO north farade, main house #5019



Survey # CARP2 - 1561 ABC Bixler Farm Carroll County MD Reta Suffice SS 3/26/97 meg= MDSHPO Outbuildings # 1A (5110) #13 (barn) # 1c (barn) #6019



Survey # CARR- 1561 Bixler Farm Carroll County, MD Reta Suffness 3126197 neg = MDSHPO Outbuilding # 13 - bain #70 19



Survey # CARR -1561 Bixler Farm Cowoll Country MD Reta Suffine SS 3126197 neg = MDSHPO Outsuilding #10 - born #80 19



Survey # (ARR 1561 Bixler Farm Carroll Country MD Para Suffress 3126197 neg=mDSHPO Outbuilding # 10 - brun #9019



Suvey # (AVZ12-1561 Bixler Farm Canal County MD Rua Suffress 3106197 NG = MOSHPO outbuilding # 10 = shod #10 8 19



Survey # CAILY -1561 Bixler Farm Carroll Country MD Reta Suffress 3126197 neg = mDSHPO Outbuilding # 1E #118 19



Survey # CARR -1561 Bixler Farm Carroll County MD Reta Suffiness 3/26/97 neg = mostpo outbuilding #IF #12019



Survey # CARR - 1561 BIXLEN Form Carroll County MD Ruta Suffiness 3126197 neg = MDSHPO west facades, tenand hon se #13 07 19



Survey # CARR-1561 Bixler Farm Carroll County MD Reta Suffress 3126/97 neg = MDSHPO West peade, terant house #14 0 19



Survey # CARR- 1561 Bixler Farm Carroll (ownly MI) Ruta Suffiness 3/26/97 neg = MDSHPO South facado, tenant house #15019



Survey # CARR-1561 Bixler Farm Canol County MD Ruta Suffress 3/26/97 MES = MOSHPO Past facade, tenant house #16019



Survey # CARR- 1561 Bixler Farm Canal County MD Risa Suffness 3/26/97 neg = IMD SHPO east + north facades, tenand house #17019



Survey # CA1212-1561 BIXLEY Farm Canal Country MD Ruta Sufficess 3126197 nes = MDSHPO north facado, tenant house # 18 0 17



Survey # CAR12 - 1561 Bixler Farm Candl country MD Puta Sufferss 3126197 neg = MOSHPO onf Building # 24 (gavage) #19019